

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-16 (Canceled).

17. (Previously Presented) An image reading apparatus for optically reading an image, comprising:

lighting means for lighting a predetermined region including an object to be read;

5 image pickup means for receiving reflected light from the predetermined region lit by the lighting means and for outputting a corresponding image pickup signal;

lighting control means for controlling an amount of light emitted by the lighting means in a predetermined range so as to 10 control the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means to a proper level; and

determining means for determining a dark image pickup state based on the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means;

15 wherein the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means to be low when the determining means determines the dark image pickup state; and

wherein the lighting means is configured to repeatedly generate pulsed light in units of image pickup frames, the 20 determining means determines the dark image pickup state in units

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

of the image pickup frames, and the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means in units of the image pickup frames.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means to be a lowest amount, within the predetermined range, when the determining means 5 determines the dark image pickup state.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein, when the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means to be low when the determining means determines the dark image pickup state, the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means so as to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means at a predetermined level. 5

20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means within the predetermined range so as to set a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means at a proper level. 5

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 17, wherein the determining means compares a maximum value
of the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means to
a predetermined threshold, and determines the dark image pickup
5 state when the maximum value is below the predetermined
threshold.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 21, wherein, when the maximum value is determined by the
determining means to be equal to or more than the predetermined
threshold, the lighting control means controls the amount of
5 light emitted by the lighting means within the predetermined
range to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup
means at a proper level.

23. (Previously Presented) An image reading apparatus for
optically reading an image, comprising:

lighting means for lighting a predetermined region including
an object to be read;

5 image pickup means for receiving reflected light from the
predetermined region lit by the lighting means and for outputting
a corresponding image pickup signal;

lighting control means for controlling an amount of light
emitted by the lighting means in a predetermined range so as to

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

- 10 control the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means to a proper level; and determining means for determining a dark image pickup state based on the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means;
- 15 wherein the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means to be low when the determining means determines the dark image pickup state; and wherein the determining means determines the dark image pickup state using an image pickup signal corresponding to a substantially central area in an image pickup display among image pickup signals output from the image pickup means.
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24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means to be a lowest amount, within the predetermined range, when the determining means 5 determines the dark image pickup state.
25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein, when the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means to be low when the determining means determines the dark image pickup state, the 5 lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

the lighting means so as to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means at a predetermined level.

26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means within the predetermined range so as to set a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means at a proper level.

27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the determining means compares a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means to a predetermined threshold, and determines the dark image pickup state when the maximum value is below the predetermined threshold.

28. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 27, wherein, when the maximum value is determined by the determining means to be equal to or more than the predetermined threshold, the lighting control means controls the amount of light emitted by the lighting means within the predetermined range to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup means at a proper level.

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

29. (Previously Presented) An image reading apparatus for optically reading an image, comprising;

an LED which lights a predetermined region including an object to be read;

5 an image pickup element which receives reflected light from the predetermined region lit by the LED and which outputs a corresponding image pickup signal;

a dark image pickup detecting circuit which determines a dark image pickup state based on the image pickup signal output 10 from the image pickup element; and

15 a control section which controls an amount of light supplied by the LED within a predetermined range so as to control the image pickup signal output from the image pickup element to a proper level, and which controls an amount of light supplied from the LED to be low when the dark image pickup detecting circuit determines the dark image pickup state;

20 wherein the LED is driven to repeatedly generate light pulses in units of image pickup frames, the dark image pickup detecting circuit determines the dark image pickup state in units of the image pickup frames, and the control section controls the amount of light supplied from the LED in units of the image pickup frames.

Application No. 10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

30. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to
claim 29, wherein the control section controls the amount of
light emitted by the LED to be a lowest ~~mount~~ amount in the
predetermined range, when the dark image pickup detecting circuit
5 determines the dark image pickup state.

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 29, wherein, when the control section controls the amount
of light emitted by the LED to be low when the dark image pickup
detecting circuit determines the dark image pickup state, the
control section controls the amount of light emitted by the LED
5 so as to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup
element at a predetermined level.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 29, wherein the control section controls the amount of
light emitted by the LED within the predetermined range so as to
set a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from the
5 image pickup element at a proper level.

33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 29, wherein the dark image pickup detecting circuit
compares a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from
the image pickup element to a predetermined threshold, and

Application No.10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

5 determines the dark image pickup state when the maximum value is below the predetermined threshold.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 33, wherein when the maximum value is determined by the dark image pickup detecting circuit to be equal to or more than the predetermined threshold, the control section controls the 5 amount of light emitted by the LED within the predetermined range so as to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup element at a proper level.

35. (Previously Presented) An image reading apparatus for optically reading an image comprising:

an LED which lights a predetermined region including an object to be read;

5 an image pickup element which receives reflected light from the predetermined region lit by the LED and which outputs a corresponding image pickup signal;

a dark image pickup detecting circuit which determines a dark image pickup state based on the image pickup signal output 10 from the image pickup element; and

a control section which controls an amount of light supplied by the LED within a predetermined range so as to control the

Application No.10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

image pickup signal output from the image pickup element to a proper level, and which controls an amount of light supplied from 15 the LED to be low when the dark image pickup detecting circuit determines the dark image pickup state;

wherein the dark image pickup detecting circuit determines a dark image pickup state using an image pickup signal corresponding to a substantial center area in an image pickup 20 display among image pickup signals output from the image pickup element.

36. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the control section controls the amount of light emitted by the LED to be a lowest mount amount in the predetermined range, when the dark image pickup detecting circuit determines 5 the dark image pickup state.

37. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein, when the control section controls the amount of light emitted by the LED to be low when the dark image pickup detecting circuit determines the dark image pickup state, the 5 control section controls the amount of light emitted by the LED so as to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup element at a predetermined level.

Application No.10/007,281
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.312

Customer No. 01933

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 35, wherein the control section controls the amount of
light emitted by the LED within the predetermined range so as to
set a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from the
5 image pickup element at a proper level.

39. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 35, wherein the dark image pickup detecting circuit
compares a maximum value of the image pickup signal output from
the image pickup element to a predetermined threshold, and
5 determines the dark image pickup state when the maximum value is
below the predetermined threshold.

40. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to
claim 39, wherein when the maximum value is determined by the
dark image pickup detecting circuit to be equal to or more than
the predetermined threshold, the control section controls the
5 amount of light emitted by the LED within the predetermined range
so as to set the image pickup signal output from the image pickup
element at a proper level.